

Mt. Carmel UMC News and Encouraging Word

May 15, 2024

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IMPORTANT DATES

Monday, May 20 at 6:30 there will be a Unified Board Meeting at the Church. If you are on the board and cannot attend, please let us know ASAP.

This Sunday is your last chance to walk away with a beautiful piece of art by Fran Wilkerson. There are still many beautiful pieces available. We want all the pieces to find good homes!

Graduate Alert

Do you know someone that is graduating high school, college, or graduate school this year? This is the last week to submit their names! We would love to celebrate their accomplishment! Please email Jen in the Church office with all the appropriate information including a photo.

In Other Important News

Outreach articles in the Encouraging Word usually request help from the congregation. We are taking a little time this summer to highlight and thank our Congregational Caretakers. The first group that is hard at work is the **Faith/Hope Circle**. This group of ladies put together the funeral/celebration of life luncheons, take care of our seniors and shut-ins by delivering Christmas cookies and meals throughout the year. They send cards to members and friends every month. This group provides lunch for the Day Care workers every May. They help Leslie with the Christmas pageant. This group provides gifts for Bingo games for Autumn Lake Adult Daycare Center. They donate to various charities. And, lest we forget, provide the goodies for Coffee Hour the first Sunday of every month. Whew, just writing this makes me tired! You ladies rock! Thank you for all your hard work. It is truly appreciated.

Encouraging Word from Pastor Mike

Walter Mitty is the main character from James Thurber's short story, "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty." In the original short story, which by the way is very different from the two movies the story inspired, Walter daydreams a series of heroic daydreams where he imagines himself as a heroic pilot, a gifted surgeon, a deadly assassin and heroically facing a firing squad. He daydreams about himself doing amazing and heroic things – which of course never happen.

The character has inspired the creation of a word which has entered the official lexicon of the English language. The word, mittyesque, is defined in the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, as an ineffectual person who spends more time in heroic daydreams than paying attention

to the real world. A secondary definition is: someone who intentionally attempts to mislead or convince others that he is something he is not.

In Acts 1: 9 - 11 we find the disciples, who have just witnessed Jesus lift off into heaven, still standing around with their heads in the clouds. Perhaps they were daydreaming about heaven – who knows. Whatever it was they were doing they were not paying attention to the real world around them. Instead, they were focused on the Kingdom where they may have been imagining further adventures with their Lord. They had to be called back to earth by two heavenly beings who essentially said: “What are you guys doing with your heads in the clouds? Don’t worry about Jesus – he will reappear just as mysteriously as he did the first time.”

In other words, “You need to focus on the work he commissioned you to do and get your heads out of the clouds. Stop daydreaming about being in heaven with Jesus! Do heavens work here in this world, Jesus will be with you, and you’ll shine with Heaven’s light in this world.”

How do you imagine yourselves being received into heaven? Heroically? With acclamations of the great crowd of witnesses that have gone before? Well, it’s OK to daydream about that wonderful day. But in the meantime, what goes for the disciples also goes for us. We need to get our heads out of the clouds and not just dream about the kingdom – we need to do the Kingdom work in the here and now. We need to not just think about doing heroic things in the name of Jesus – we actually need to be doing them.

Being a Christian isn’t about the sweet by and by. It is about doing God’s will on earth in the here and now. Dreaming of heaven is fine. But if that’s all we are doing, if the dream doesn’t move us to work toward the Kingdom through practical ministry in the here and now, then aren’t we being a little like Walter Mitty?

Walter dreamed of being a hero – but never was. Christ invites us to be real heroes in our world and enables us through the Spirit to be so. We don’t have to dream about it – we get to make it so! So, let’s do what the angels suggest – get our heads out of the clouds and get to work making the Kingdom real in our present-day reality.

That’s all for today. Be well, be forgiving and gracious. Be safe, stay connected, and I’ll see you in church or on Zoom this Sunday.

Blessings – Pastor Mike

Weekly Reminders

If you have prayer requests, even if you plan to share them at Sunday worship, please forward them ahead of time to Jen at the church office and she will compile a list to be used on Sunday morning. The church email is mtcarmel21122@gmail.com and our phone number is 410-255-8887.

Prayer Cards are also available in the Narthex on Sunday morning. If you have a prayer or concern, we encourage you to fill out a card and it will be collected and read that morning.

We want to remind you that we are still using Zoom for our Sunday Services. (Join us in your pj’s with a morning cup of coffee) I open the Zoom meeting at 9 a.m. to give people time to sign on.

The earlier you sign on the easier it is for me to attend to the greeting responsibilities. It also gives us a chance to chat and share prayer requests. **If you should have any problems logging in, please alert Jennifer in the office.**

Mt. Carmel United Methodist Church

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